

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 114586
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TAGS: EAIR, UK

SUBJECT: CIVAIR - US-UK CIVAIR TALKS--AVIATION DAILY
ARTICLE

FOLLOWING FRONT PAGE ARTICLE ENTITLED "UK OPTIMISTIC OVER
REOPENED BERMUDA TALKS (LONDON REPORT)" APPEARS IN MAY 17
EDITION "AVIATION DAILY."

QUOTE. THE UK MONDAY ENTERED WITH A GREAT DEAL OF OPTIMISM
WHAT MAY BE THE LAST ROUND OF TALKS AIMED AT NEGOTIATING A
NEW UK-US AIR AGREEMENT. OFFICIALS IN WHITEHALL BELIEVE
THAT MORE THAN HALF THE BASIS OF A NEW AGREEMENT ALREADY
HAS BEEN ACHIEVED, AND THAT WITH GOODWILL ON BOTH SIDES,
THE REMAINING OUTSTANDING ISSUES CAN BE SETTLED.

THESE ISSUES ARE FURTHER RIGHTS FOR UK AND CARIBBEAN AIR-
LINES TO FLY INTO THE US FROM THE LATTER AREA; FURTHER
CONCESSIONS FROM THE US ON THE NEED FOR CAPACITY CONTROL
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 STATE 114586

MACHINERY; AND THE NORTH ATLANTIC DESIGNATION ISSUE. A
PARTICULAR STUMBLING BLOCK APPEARS TO BE THE QUESTION OF
FIFTH FREEDOM RIGHTS BEYOND LONDON AND HONG KONG CURRENTLY
ENJOYED BY THE US AIRLINES, OVER WHICH THERE IS BELIEVED TO
BE CONSIDERABLE DIFFICULTY.

THE UK HAS MOVED CONSIDERABLY FROM ITS EARLIER POSITION,

HAVING SURRENDERED ITS ORIGINAL INSISTENCE ON SINGLE DESIGNATION BETWEEN LONDON AND NEW YORK, WHILE IT HAS ALSO MOVED CONSIDERABLY ON THE CAPACITY CONTROL ISSUE. BUT THERE ARE ALSO AREAS WHERE THE UK WANTS TO SEE THE US MAKE SOME CONCESSIONS. ONE IS AN EARLY DECISION BY THE US ON WHETHER THE CONCORDE WILL BE ALLOWED INTO WASHINGTON AT THE END OF THE CURRENT 16-MONTH TRIAL PERIOD IN SEPTEMBER. THE UK BELIEVES THAT ITS RIGHTS TO DESIGNATE CONCORDE AS ONE OF ITS AIRCRAFT TO FLY TO AND FROM THE US ALREADY IS ENSHRINED IN THE EXISTING BERMUDA AGREEMENT, AND WILL BE REITERATED IN THE NEW ONE. BUT AT THE SAME TIME, THE UK THINKS THAT THE US ALREADY HAS HAD MORE THAN ENOUGH DATA AND DIRECT EXPERIENCE WITH THE CONCORDE TO ENABLE IT TO SAY NOW WHETHER IT CAN CONTINUE TO USE WASHINGTON.

THE UK IS MAKING IT CLEAR THAT IT DOES NOT INTEND TO SIGN ANY NEW BERMUDA AGREEMENT IF IT BELIEVES THERE IS THE SLIGHTEST DOUBT THAT THE NEW AGREEMENT WILL BE BREACHED AS SOON AS IT IS SIGNED BY THE US REFUSING TO PERMIT REGULAR AND PERMANENT WASHINGTON CONCORDE OPERATIONS.

BEYOND THIS, THE UK ACCEPTS THAT THERE IS SCOPE FOR AN EXTENSION OF THE EXISTING AGREEMENT FOR A FEW WEEKS BEYOND THE JUNE 22 DEADLINE IF NO AGREEMENT IS REACHED IN THE CURRENT TALKS AND IF IT LOOKS AS THOUGH AN AGREEMENT IS POSSIBLE WITH A FEW MORE WEEKS OF TALKING. UK OFFICIALS DO NOT WANT "TO SPOIL TO SHIP FOR A HA'PORTH OF TAR," AND SAY THAT IF BY THE END OF MAY OR EARLY JUNE IT IS CLEAR THAT THE WAY IS OPEN FOR A NEW PACT WITH ONLY A LITTLE UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 03 STATE 114586

MORE NEGOTIATING TIME, THEY WOULD BE PREPARED TO EXTEND THE EXISTING AGREEMENT EITHER AS IT STANDS OR IN SOME MODIFIED FORM, EVEN PERHAPS INCORPORATING ALL THAT HAS BEEN AGREED SO FAR.

THIS IS REGARDED AS A CONSIDERABLE CONCESSION, AND ONE THAT IS REALISTIC IN THE LIGHT OF THE DESIRE OF BOTH SIDES TO SEE CONTINUATION OF AIR SERVICES TO AND FROM THE OTHER COUNTRY WITHOUT DISRUPTION. IT IS CLEAR THAT THE CONCESSION IS BEING HELD OUT TO THE US AS AN INDUCEMENT TO MEET THE UK HALF WAY IN THE LATEST ROUND OF DISCUSSIONS, AND IT IS HOPED THAT IT WILL BE RECOGNIZED AS SUCH. THE CONCESSION, IT IS STRESSED IN WHITEHALL, SHOULD NOT BE READ AS A SIGN OF A WEAKENING BRITISH STANCE. THE UK IS STILL DETERMINED TO GET A NEW BERMUDA AGREEMENT THAT GIVES IT CONSIDERABLY BETTER TERMS THAN THE PREVIOUS ONE, AND NOTHING THE UK SAYS OR DOES IS INTENDED TO ALTER THAT FACT. CHRISTOPHER

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